1303

A

LETTER

FROM

DARBY TRACY,

CHAIRMAN, IN LONDON,

TO

MR. *DENIS FEAGAN,*

BREECHES-MAKER, AT EDENDERRY.

WHEREIN IS CLEARLY PROVED THE
EFFECTS WHICH

AN UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN,

WILL HAVE ON THE INTEREST AND HAPPINESS OF

THE COMMON PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

THE SECOND EDITION.

DUBLIN.

PRINTED BY W. FOLDS, STRAND-STREET.

1799.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following original Letter was found a few days ſince on the road between Edenderry and Philipſtown, and was given to the Editor as a curious ſpecimen of native Iriſh ſagacity. The Editor thinks it an object worthy the public attention, which (he conceives) has not yet been ſufficiently directed to this important enquiry, viz. "In what manner the Union with Great Britain is likely to affect the intereſts and happineſs of the common people of Ireland?" *The Editor makes no apology for publiſhing the Letter in the uncouth dreſs in which it was found, as he thinks any attempt at improving the ſtile would have diminiſhed the effect of the genuine ſimplicity of manner in which Mr. Tracy has delivered his ſentiments. The only liberty which the Editor has taken with the original Letter is, that of correcting the orthography, which he muſt acknowledge was, in ſome places, rather defective.*

A

LETTER,

&c. &c.

DEAR DENIS,

YOUR'S I received by the hands of Tim Foley of Cappagh. You tell me you ſuppoſe, from my long ſtay in London, that I am grown a foreigner to Ireland, and perhaps a fine Engliſh gentleman. No ſuch thing, Denis dear. I love poor old Ireland as warmly in my heart as ever; and would turn out to fight for her in a minute, if there was occaſion. and as to my growing a fine gentleman, you may truſt Darby Tracy for that, ſorrow one of our family was ever given that way. I keep my own car-

riage

riage to be ſure; but then, I carry it myſelf with the help of my partner, Nephew Dick, who is grown a brave ſtrapping fellow, and works the poles ſweetly. Our ſtand is in St. James's-ſtreet, at the door of the St. James's coffee-houſe, hard by the Cyder cellar, where, ſo far from forgetting old Ireland, my chief delight in the long ſpare mornings is to be reading the Iriſh newſpapers to the boys on the flags, and there we ſee what you are all doing, juſt as if we were in the thick of you. I find you are kicking up a fine row in Dublin about this Union that's going to be between England and Ireland. Now, to tell you the truth, I didn't much like the notion myſelf at firſt, more eſpecially when I ſaw that all the counſellors were ſo mad angry at it—aye—and proud enough I was of the flouriſhing ſpeech of the great counſellor Tom Goold concluding ſo glorioufly with a fine roufing oath—a ſure argument with us boys on the flags. Ah, but Denis, thinks I, thoſe lawyers are moſt of them parliament-men, or expecting to be made ſuch, and may be that's the reaſon why they're now ſo buſy crying up the parliament, which you and I can very well remember they uſed to cry down without mercy. Well, but that's not all, for ſeeing in thoſe

Iriſh

Iriſh newſpapers ſuch a number of pamphlets adver-tiſed on this ſame Union, I grew very curious to get the reading of ſome of them, and ſo I got my friend the waiter—Do you remember Nick Caſſidy, our old ſchoolfellow, in Edenderry?—Sure he's waiter at the coffee-houſe here; and ſo I got him to lend me one or two of thoſe pamphlets that are kept for the uſe of the quality in the coffee-room—but, after poring over them till I was half blind, and puzzling myſelf long enough, ſtriving to make out their meaning, I could find little or nothing in them that *touched the like of us, Denis.* They were all about the * Independance of Parliament, and the Competency of Parliament, and Imperial Rights, and the miniſter's influence, and the final Judica-ture, and a great deal more high ſounding talk, that I could'nt underſtand, and I'm ſure didn't *in any way touch us.* Upon this I began to think that there was no uſe to be reading pamphlets or ſpeeches made by one ſide of the quality, to ſhew the other ſide how this Union concerned them; but never conſidering or caring to the value of a potatoe ſkin *how it might touch the like of us.* Why Denis dear, what

* Mr. Tracy's orthography is ſo extremely fantaſtical in this place, that the Editor has been obliged to gueſs at the words in-tended to be uſed by him.

what concern is it to you or me whether the Iriſh lawyers are making ſpeeches in the parliament houſe—or minding their buſineſs in the four courts —or whether my lord marquis or my lord duke could make moſt of his borough by ſelling the ſeats (as they call them) for ready money at home, or jobbing them here at St. James's ?—No, no—we have nothing to do with ſuch matters ; the thing for the like of us to look after is, what this ſame Iriſh parliament (that's grown ſuch a pet with the quality of a ſudden) has done for the poor of Ireland ? —That's what I want them to tell me. I am ſure it has not relieved them from that old burthen the tithes, which is a heavier load upon the ſhoulders of a poor cottier, than my lord Allen ſitting in general Dalrymple's lap would be upon my nephew Dick and me if we were obliged to carry them from College Green to the Hill of Howth ! And what's more, I'm told there's one Patrick Duigenan, who, by his name, ſhould be one of *our own own ſelves*, and he is the moſt furious of them all againſt any one meddling with tithes—I ſuppoſe he is a tithe proctor himſelf, or ſome ſuch thing, and we all know what grinders and foul-mouthed dogs thoſe proctors are. But ſurely, Denis, this Pat. Duigenan

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can never be the ſame black muzzled little fellow that uſed to be waiting on the prieſt, and carrying the incenſe at Arran Quay chapel, when you and I (God be with the day) were on our frolics in ſweet Dublin? And a cute ſcholar that little black muzzled fellow was, and had all the maſs by heart, and many a time I've heard him run it over faſter nor any horſe could trot. And ſo you ſee what learning may bring a man to. But I was talking about the tithes, and going to tell you the good news I heard from one of the great people ſtanding at the door of the coffee-houſe; how the tithes would be all paid out of the king's treaſury, once this ſame Union was ſettled, and how they would provide comfortably for our clergy well as their own. How do you like that Denis? Troth if you knew all—*neither you, nor the like of you* would be againſt this Union —do you know who it is that's againſt it—I can tell you—for we know more of Iriſh politics here on the flags in St. James's-ſtreet, than you do on the ſteps of the parliament houſe in College Green. Beſides the counſellors, as I told you before, there's the * copperaſhion of Dublin, with thoſe gay lads the aldermen

* It is evident, from the context, that corporation was the word here intended—the original ſpelling has been preſerved in this inſtance to ſerve as a ſpecimen of Mr. Tracy's orthography, in decyphering and correcting which the Editor has beſtowed uncommon pains and labour.

aldermen at their head—aye and the owners of boroughs who have ſeats in parliament, may be you couldn't gueſs the reaſon why?—and the ſweet Orange boys, (ſmoak that Denis). But moſt and greateſt of all againſt the Union is, Miſter Speaker—his honour, I am told, has done many a good job for Ireland; and I heard one of your linen factors t'ther night, in the cyder cellar ſwear, that "Jack Foſter was worth the whole *kit* of Iriſh patriots put together." But his honour, it ſeems, is a great financier—do you know what that is, Denis? why it's a man who underſtands how to borrow plenty of money, and to lay on plenty of taxes to pay it; and to be ſure, his honour muſt be mainly ignorant indeed, if he did not (by this time) know better than what we can tell him, how much he'd loſe by the removal of the parliament, as I'm afraid they'd never make him ſpeaker of the Engliſh houſe after his oppoſing the Union. I'm told his place is as good as ſix thouſand a-year to him—why then "by the Lord Harry," as counſellor Tom Goold ſaid, as well as I love Ireland, and as much as I like the Union, if I was a parliament man I'd ſurely vote, aye and ſpeak too, againſt it, ſooner than I'd give up ſix thouſand a year—aye, and ſo would you too, Denis, eſpecially if you were a great financier.

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After all, my dear Denis, is it not very provoking to ſee a parcel of fat city aldermen, who are burſting with the good things they have got at the caſtle, have the impudence to ſet themſelves up (becauſe they are backed by ſome of the great parliament-men) to fly in the face of the government, aye and of the people both of England and Ireland in this buſineſs!—I'd be glad to know whether they've the modeſt aſſurance to expect to be joined by the catholics too?—may-be theſe borough-jobbers forget how reſpectfully the catholic petition was treated by them ſome time ago—didn't they ſcout and kick it out of doors—and wern't they going to ſend the ſon of the great Edmund Burke to Newgate for merely offering to lay it quietly on the table of the Parliament-houſe?—By my ſoul, Denis, I am very ſorry for theſe things, and I forgive them with all my heart, but that doesn't ſay that I can quite forget them when I ſee theſe ſame high-flyers ſetting themſelves againſt the good of poor Ireland, and againſt our king—God bleſs his jolly face—who is all goodneſs and kindneſs every inch of him—Wasn't it his majeſty, (God bleſs him again and again, I ſay,) that recommended our rights to this ſame parliament—and we all know how much notice they took of his recommendation—

recommendation.—For my part, Denis, I hate quarrelling and fighting, and I hate ſcolding worſe than either, and I'm ſure there will be no end of it while matters go on as they have done for ſo long a time, ſetting up Proteſtant againſt Catholic to cut one and others throats, and to call bad names, which, (as I ſaid before,) is a great deal worſe—Isn't it better for us Catholics to truſt to the fairneſs of an United Parliament for doing us juſtice, than to lay ourſelves again ſprawling at the feet of men and who care only for themſelves, and are quaking at the thoughts of what wealth and what power we poor Iriſh Catholics may grow to *an hundred years hence!—An hundred years hence!* God bleſs us, Denis, what a mighty long ſight theſe wiſe men have!—

You'll not be ſurpriſed to hear that the ringleaders of the United Iriſhmen, and ſome of the great orators of that party in parliament, are tooth and nail againſt the Union; it muſt be comical enough to ſee them and the Orange-men hugging and paying frothy compliments to one and other in parliament. The United-men indeed have good reaſon for their oppoſition, as they have a little plan of their own, I'm told, of a Union with France.—It well becomes theſe parliamentary orators, does'n't? after leading

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the poor fooliſh Iriſh boys into rebellion by their fine ſpeeches, to leave them in the lurch to be whipped and hanged by the Orange-men, and ſhot by the king's ſoldiers, while they were ſkulking in England to ſave their own necks.—Thank God we have no ſuch doings here in England, we have neither Orange-men, nor rebels of any ſort.—The poor here are contented, becauſe they are well taken care of by the parliament—*and that's what you'll be in Ireland, my boy, and all the poor labourers there too, once the Union is ſettled.*—And as to the taxes, they want to perſuade you will be laid on thick and thin by the Union, I'll tell you how that matter is here—why I have been a matter of twelve years living here in England, and I never paid a ſingle tax the whole time, except for the number of my ſedan, and that's no more than what I believe the boys of the long pole in Dublin always paid—*But why don't I pay taxes?*—Why?—*becauſe the Parliament here lays them on the rich.* Perfumery, coaches, footmen, gold and ſilver lace, race-horſes, &c. &c. &c. pay the taxes here; now I neither uſe powder nor pomatum—I have neither footmen nor coaches—nor do I keep race-horſes—and therefore the taxes don't *touch me.*—It will ſurpriſe you, Denis, to hear that

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the Parliament of England raiſed upwards of forty times as much this year for carrying on the war, as Ireland ever paid of taxes in any one year—and yet —no poor man will be called upon for a penny of this money—*it is all laid upon the* INCOME *of the* RICH —*and the more they ſcrew their tenants, the more they are obliged to pay*—It muſt be acknowledged that the Iriſh gentry won't much like this kind of taxation—they will, however, have a great draw-back in the number of their children—it is comical enough, Denis, but upon my ſoul it is true, that the more children a man has in this country the leſs taxes he has to pay—if this rule ſhould be followed up in Ireland, ſome people whom you and I know would have money to receive from the tax-gatherer, inſtead of giving him any—and perhaps this is the reaſon why your Parliament has never thought proper to lighten the burden of a poor man with a large family; I ſuppoſe they thought that neither Paddy nor Sheelagh wanted encouragement in this way.—But tell me, if you can, in what have your Parliament-men mended your condition?—O, my dear Denis, it would do your heart good to ſee the comfort and decency of the labouring people in this country; they have good clothes and warm houſes to cover them—

and

and when they are ſick they have phyſic to cure them, and a doctor to attend them, and food to ſupport themſelves and their families, and all this is paid by a ceſs laid on the landlords, the clergy, and the gentry of the pariſh, AND THE POOR MAN CONTRIBUTES NOTHING TOWARDS IT—*when I ſee this, and think how many of my unfortunate countrymen are pining in ſickneſs without aſſiſtance, and their families obliged to beg or rob from mere want, having no ſupport but accidental charity, I look upon the Union as a bleſſing ſent from God Almighty his own ſelf to relieve poor old Ireland from the ſufferings under which ſhe has been groaning ſo long!*—God be with you, my dear Denis, and may he direct you all for the beſt—and prevent you any longer being made the tools of crafty and deſigning politicians, who care not a penny for you after their turn is ſerved—With beſt love to my couſin Molly—not forgetting Judy—I remain,

Dear Denis,

Your friend and kinſman,

DARBY TRACY.

FINIS.